(a) whether the Privatization of "Palace on 'Wheels" has been under the consideration of Government; and

(b) if so, what is the decision if any taken in this regard; stating the reasons for privatizing the "Palace on Wheels" ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Convertion of Hospet-Hobii Metre Gauge Section

1285. SHRI J. P. JAVALI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether sanction has been granted for conversion of Hospet-Hubli metre gauge section;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this conversion will be beneficial to Hubli Workshop and also whether Hubli will have a broad gauge link with all the major centres of the country; and

(d) what action is being considered to accord top priority to the 144 kilometres, Hospet-Hubli broad gauge conversion ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K. C. LENKA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The work of conversion of Hospet-Hubli-Goa (with linked finger) 489 kms. has been sanctioned and included in the Budget of 92-93. The work is estimated to cost Rs. 312.00 crores.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The work on long lead items like land and bridges have been taken up. Conversion of Hospet-Hubli has been planned to be completed by 95-96, subject to availability of resources.

Female Staff in Railway Board

1286. SYED SIBTEY RAZI Will the Minis ter of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether working timings in Railway Board are from 9.00 AM to 5.30 PM.

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether 85 per cent female staff leave their offices between 4.00 PM to 4.30 PM daily;

(d) whether remaining 15 per cent female staff leave there offices at 5.00 PM daily:

(e) whether female staff get equal pay and have equal avenues of promotion with male staff of Railway Board;

(0 whether no attendance checks have been made in the evening timings during January to July, 1993 to check the tendency of leaving offices as in (c) and (d) amongst female staff; and

(g) if so, reasons therefor and action to be taken against officials of administration for creating inferiority complex amongst male staff?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K. C. LENKA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The working timings in Railway Board are from 9.00 AM to 5 30 PM with lunch break from 1.00 PM to 1.30 PM.

(c) and (d) No. Sir.

(e) Yes, Sir

(0 Attendance checks have been conducted in the evening timings also during January to July, 1993.

(g) Does not arise.

Abortion leave for women employees of Railway and Railway Board

1287. SYED SIBTEY RAZI Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether abortion leave is granted to women employees of Railway and Railway Board;

(b) if so, the number of such employees separately for zone-wise and Railway Board availed of this facility during each month from January to July, 1993;

(c) whether a large number of some women employees having three children of Railway Board have availed of this leave in the past in addition to availing of such leave during 1993;

(d) if so, the number of such employees cadre-wise with details of such relevant rules prescribing no children limit and no time limit; and

(e) whether some of Railway Board women employees have availed of abortion leave on fake medical certificates during May and June, 1993 issued by Hospitals of New Delhi Municipal Committee without attending the OPDs even once in this regard;

(0 whetherGovernment propose torget these fake certificates vierified from OPD records of New Delhi Municipal Committee Hospitals;

(g) whether Government propose to issue some instructions either on the basis of issues or on the basis of past occasions for such leave to check misuse in future;

(h) whether present latest scientific techniques do not permit 42 days' abortion leave; and

(i) if so, details thereof and if not reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K. C. LENKA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Information in respect of zonal Railways is being collected and will be laid- on the Table of the House. As regards Railway Board's office, the information is as under:

January 93 — Nil
February 93 — 1
March 93 — Nil
April 93 — 3
May 93 — 1
June 93 — 1
July 93 — Nil.

(c) and (d) While taking abortion leave, the number of children is not required to be mentioned by the applicant. The information sought for is, therefore, not available. Rule 551(2) of the Indian Railway Establishment Code, Volume I, 1985 edition prescribes that leave for abortion to women employees of Railway and Railway Board, irrespective of number of surviving children, may be granted upto six weeks on production of medical certificate from the authorised medical attendant.

(e) and *(f)* Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(g) to (i) Abortion leave and the number of days for which it is to be given is decided by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the nodal Ministry for the purpose.

गुजरात के गांधीनगर से सीधी रेल सेवा

1288. श्री राजूभाई ए. परमार : क्या रेल मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार आठवीं पंचवर्षीय योजना के दौरान गुजरात के गांधीनगर से मुम्बई, दिल्ली, कलकत्ता और मद्रास जैसे बड़े शहरों के लिए सीधी रेल सेवायें शुरू कराने का विचार रखती है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो उसका ब्यौरा क्या है और इन सेवाओं के कब तक शुरू कर दिए जाने की संभावना है; और

(ग) यदि नहीं, तो उसके क्या कारण हैं ?

रेल मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री के. सी. लेंका) : (क) फिलहाल ऐसा कोई प्रस्ताव नहीं है ।

(ख) प्रश्न नहीं उठता ।

(ग) व्यवहार्यता के औचित्य की कमी ।

Development of bridge on river Sharavati

1289. SHRI J. P. JAVALI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Bridge on river Sharavati near Honnavar on National Highway 17 has been closed for use for a very long time:

(b) *it* so, reasons for the same;

(c) what action has been taken to facilitate thousands of vehicles which ply on this road; and

(d) by when the bridge is likely to be ready for the normal flow of traffic ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) to (d) Bridge on river Sharavati near Honnavar on NH-17 in Karnataka has shown signs of distress due to corrosive environment. For the safety of travelling public the bridge was closed to heavy vehicular traffic in July 1991 and only light vehicles are permitted to ply on the bridge. For smooth flow of heavy vehicles 6 Nos. barges have been deployed in maintaining a ferry service across the river. The Ministry have recently sanctioned an estimate amounting to Rs. 436.45 lakhs for repair/strengthening of the existing bridge and the old bridge is expected to be ready for the normal traffic in the year 1995.